

Remarks/Arguments

Reconsideration of this application is requested.

Claim Status

Claims 1-18 were presented. Claims 2, 3, 6, 7, 9, 11, 12, 14, 16 and 17 are amended, and claims 1, 4, 5, 8, 10, 13 and 18 are canceled. Accordingly, after entry of this amendment, claims 2, 3, 6, 7, 9, 11, 12 and 14-17 are pending.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 2, 3, 6, 7, 9, 11, 12 and 14-17 are indicated as allowable if rewritten in independent form. In response, claim 2 is rewritten in independent form; claim 3 is amended to depend from claim 2; claim 6 is rewritten in independent form; claim 7 is amended to depend from claim 6; claim 9 is rewritten in independent form; and claims 11, 12, 14, 16 and 17 are amended to depend from claim 9. Claim 15 in its original form depended from claim 14. Thus, applicant submits that claims 2, 3, 6, 7, 9, 11, 12 and 14-17 are now in condition for allowance.

Claim Rejections

Claims 1, 4, 5, 8, 10 and 13 are rejected under 35 USC 102(e) as anticipated by Sekiguchi et al. (6,535,451). Claim 18 is rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as obvious over Sekiguchi et al. in view of Ooishi (US 2001/0015930). In response, claims 1, 4, 5, 8, 10, 13 and 18 are canceled, without prejudice. This action is taken solely to facilitate allowance of those claims already indicated as allowable. Applicant does not concede the merits of the grounds for rejection and reserves the right to pursue separately filed continuation application(s) to the subject matter of the canceled claims.

Conclusion

This application is now in condition for allowance. The Examiner is urged to telephone the undersigned at (213) 337-6700 to discuss any issues that remain after entry of this amendment.

Appl. No. 10/668,027
Amdt. Dated May 31, 2005
Reply to Office Action of March 3, 2005

Attorney Docket No. 81790.0299
Customer No. 26021

Any fees due with this response may be charged to our Deposit Account No.
50-1314.

Respectfully submitted,
HOGAN & HARTSON L.L.P.

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